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Russell et al.

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(54) **SYSTEM AND METHODS FOR ASSIGNATION
AND USE OF MEDIA CONTENT
SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE PRIVILEGES**

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See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

This invention describes a system and methods for media
content subscription service distribution; typical services
include cable television, premium content channels, pay-per-
view, XM radio, and online mp3 services. Subscribers use
portable electronic devices to store digital certificates certi-
fying the subscriber's privileges and an assigned public key.
The devices can communicate with specially enabled televi-
sions, radios, computers, or other media presentation appa-
ratuses. These, in turn, can communicate with central data-
bases owned by the provider, for verification purposes.
Methods of the invention describe media content subscription
service privilege issuing and use. The invention additionally
describes methods for protecting media content transmitted
to users with a variety of encryption schemes. The invention
also comprises methods for subscribed users to bestow a
subset of their privileges to a number of secondary users, with
appropriate permission from the media content subscription
service provider.

27 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets

